

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BEIRUT 08870 121507Z

53

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EUR-12 SS-15 NSC-05 CIAE-00 INR-07

NSAE-00 SAM-01 /051 W

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R 121414Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5287

INFO AMEMBASSY ROME

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 8870

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PDIP, LE, VT

SUBJ: DEPARTURE OF BOUTROS DEEB TO HOLY SEE

1. PRESIDENTIAL ADVISOR, BOUTROS DEEB, TELEPHONED THIS MORNING TO CONFIRM HIS DEPARTURE TUESDAY, JULY 15 FOR ROME WHERE HE WILL BE THE LEBANESE AMBASSADOR TO THE HOLY SEE. THIS HAS BEEN PENDING FOR SOME TIME AND DEPARTURE HAS BEEN REPEATEDLY POSTPONED DURING THE RECENT LOCAL CIVIL STRIFE AND POLITICAL CRISIS.

2. AS DEPARTMENT AWARE, DEEB HAS BEEN CLOSE AND GOOD FRIEND OF THIS EMBASSY FOR AT LEAST LAST FOUR YEARS. HE IS EXTREMELY INDUSTRIOUS, THOUGHTFUL, CONSCIENTIOUS AND HONEST--RARE QUALITIES IN THE LEBANESE DIPLOMATIC CORPS TODAY. HIS ASSIGNMENT TO THE HOLY SEE HAS BEEN SUBJECT TO A GOOD DEAL OF LOCAL GOSSIP BUT BELIEVE THIS CAN BEST BE EXPLAINED BY DEEB'S OWN DEEP RELIGIOUS FEELINGS PLUS INCREASED VATICAN INTEREST IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND IMPORTANCE THAT LEBANON TRADITIONALLY ATTACHES TO ITS RELATIONS IN THE HOLY SEE. IN ADDITION TO ARABIC, DEEB SPEAKS EXCELLENT FRENCH, READS ENGLISH AND SPEAKS IT ONLY WITH DIFFICULTY.

3. SHOULD EMBASSY ROME HAVE MUCH INTEREST IN MIDDLE EAST OR CHURCH AFFAIRS, BELIEVE DEEB MIGHT BE AN INTERESTING AND READILY ACCESSIBLE CONTACT.

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GODLEY

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NNN

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